



Contesting the 'national interest' and maintaining 'our lifestyle': A discursive analysis of political rhetoric around climate change

Author(s): Kurz T, Augoustinos M, Crabb S
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Abstract:

The release of the fourth United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report in February 2007 prompted a flood of responses from political leaders around the globe. Perhaps nowhere was this more apparent than in Australia, where its release coincided with the first sitting week of the Australian Parliament, in an election year. The current study involves a discursive analysis of climate change rhetoric produced by politicians from the major Australian political parties in the period following the release of the IPCC leading up to the national election. Data include both transcripts of parliamentary debate and statements directly broadcast in the media. The analysis focuses on the various ways in which the issue of climate change was invoked and rhetorically managed by each of the two parties in the lead up to the election. In particular, it focuses on the ways in which appeals to the 'national interest' and 'lifestyle maintenance', both regular features of political rhetoric, were mobilized by both parties to discursively manage their positions on the climate change issue. Implications of the ways in which such appeals were constructed are discussed in relation to the discursive limits of the ways in which the issue of climate change is constructed in public debate.

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Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Mitigation

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article, Research Article

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified